

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5        1. A method for distributed data archiving, comprising  
the steps of:  
          accessing data from at least one external source;  
          segmenting the data into at least one information  
          group; and  
10        storing said at least one information group onto  
one of a plurality of archival storage media, said  
at least one information group being stored on said  
one archival storage medium with an identification  
that is unique from any other information groups  
15        stored within said archival storage media so that  
said information groups are capable of being  
independently accessed.
- 20        2. A method according to claim 1, wherein said archival  
storage media comprise digital versatile disks  
(DVDs).
- 25        3. A method according to claim 1, wherein each said  
archival storage media comprises a self contained  
database file for each of said information groups.
4. A method according to claim 3, wherein said database  
file is implemented by Digital Image Communications  
for Medicine (DICOM-3).

5. A method according to claim 3, wherein said information groups comprise meta-data and image data.
- 5 6. A method according to claim 5, wherein each of said archival storage media comprises an embedded image player for viewing the images.
- 10 7. A method according to claim 5, wherein each of said archival storage media comprises an application for interpreting the meta-data.
- 15 8. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of creating an index file on each of said archival storage media for characterizing said information groups stored thereon.
9. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of creating an executable program on each of said archival storage media for retrieving said information groups stored thereon.
- 20 10. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of recording said information groups on said archival storage media as near-line and off-line storage.

11. A method according to claim 1, wherein a first subset of said archival storage media is provided as on-line storage.

12. A method according to claim 1, wherein a second subset of said archival storage media is provided as near-line storage.

13. A method according to claim 1, wherein a third subset of said archival storage media is provided as off-line storage.

14. A method according to claim 10, wherein said on-line storage comprises a hard disk.

15. A method according to claim 11, wherein said near-line storage comprises a jukebox storage for providing sequentially selectable access to at least one archival storage media.

16. A method according to claim 12, wherein said off-line storage comprises shelf storage for said archival storage media.

17. A distributed data archiving system, comprising:

a user interface for controlling the system, said user interface including a processor for receiving data from at least one external source and

segmenting the data into at least one information group; and

5 a memory storage for storing information groups, said memory storage including a plurality of archival storage media for storing said at least one information group onto one of said archival storage media with an identification that is unique from any other of said information groups stored thereon so that said information groups are capable of being independently accessed.

10 18. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 17, wherein said user interface comprises a personal computer.

15 19. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 17, wherein said external source comprises a workstation.

20 20. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 17, wherein said external source comprises a network compatible device.

21. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 17, wherein said memory storage comprises on-line, near-line, and off-line storage media.

22. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 21, wherein said on-line storage medium comprises a hard disk.

5 23. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 21, wherein said on-line storage medium comprises a redundant array of independent disks.

10 24. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 21, wherein said near-line storage medium comprises a jukebox storage for providing sequentially selectable access to said archival storage media.

15 25. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 21, wherein said off-line storage medium comprises shelf storage for said archival storage media.

20 26. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 17, wherein said user interface creates an index file for characterizing all of said information groups to be stored on said archival storage media and stores said index file and said information groups on said archival storage media.

27. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 17, wherein said user interface creates an executable program for retrieving said information

groups stored on said archival storage media and stores said executable program on said archival storage media.

5 28. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 17, wherein said archival storage media comprise digital versatile disks (DVDs).

10 29. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 17, wherein each said archival storage media comprises a self contained database file for each of said information groups.

30. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 29, wherein said database file is implemented by Digital Image Communications for Medicine (DICOM-3).

15 31. A distributed data archiving system according to claim 21, further comprising a media recorder for recording said information groups on said archival storage media as near-line and off-line archival storage media.

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